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ABSTRACT

Prepared by Midway College's (MC's) Women's Education Study Commission, this report discusses critical issues for women's education in the last two decades of the 20th century and the role of MC, Kentucky's only women's college, in the area of women's education. After introductory material outlines the membership and tasks of the Commission, part 1 examines the issue of educating women for a full future. Three components are identified as necessary parts of college education for women: marketable skills; critical thinking capacity; and a realistic, positive self-image. In addition, part 1 argues for intervention strategies to broaden women's choices; the importance of education in religion and ethics, comparative culture, and foreign languages; and the legitimacy of homemaker and volunteer options for women. Part 2 discusses the contributions MC can make to women's education, stressing the importance of a firm commitment to liberal learning, specific training options for faculty, the integration of marketable skills with liberal education, the provision of a stimulating environment, and role models for students. Part 3 outlines specific curricular concerns and suggestions, and emphasizes the value of basic skills, computer, foreign language, and library skills instruction. Part 4 discusses the proposed implementation of a number of Commission recommendations, including a career life planning course, a campus volunteer services bureau, and improved career counseling. (HB)

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EDUCATING WOMEN
FOR A FULL FUTURE

Final Report
of the
WOMEN'S EDUCATION STUDY COMMISSION
of
MIDWAY COLLEGE
July 1, 1982

(revised October 25, 1982)

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INTRODUCTION

On May 21, 1981, twenty-one persons met at Holly Hill Inn for the commencement of a year-long study under the name of the Midway College Women's Education Study Commission. The Commission was conceived by Dr. Nelson M. Hoffman, President of the College, who appointed Dr. R. Lynn Kelley, Dean of the College, to chair it. Dr. Hoffman's charge to the Commission was to examine the critical issues for women's education in the last two decades of the twentieth century; and in particular he asked that the Commission address itself to the unique role that Midway College, as Kentucky's only women's college, might best play in the area of women's education.

Members of the Commission had been selected according to several different criteria. A mix of professional backgrounds was considered highly desirable. A mix of age groups, educational preparation and level of prior involvement with the College were also considered to be important factors for service on the Commission. The primary attribute in all members of the Commission, however, was a sense of articulate interest in the process and product of education for women.

Four members of the teaching faculty of the College were selected as members of the Commission, not only for their interest and expertise, but also so that all the Divisions of the teaching faculty would have a direct linkage to the work of the Commission. Throughout the year this arrangement proved helpful to the Faculty through a process of continuous feedback to the full Faculty of what was being discussed in the Commission.

After its organizational meeting in May, the Commission met four times. Prior to each meeting readings were sent out for the forthcoming plenum session's discussion. After each meeting minutes of the proceedings were prepared, sent to the members and approved at the next meeting. In this way a clear, accurate collective memory of the Commission was developed. To aid this process virtually all meetings of the Commission were tape-recorded to assure accurate recall. In all, some ninety hours of tape-recordings were developed.

Each meeting which was held had a special thematic substance to it. The themes had been developed through a process of consultation among several members of the Commission and were approved by the entire Commission prior to its first plenum work session. These topics were:

- EDUCATION FOR A CHANGING SOCIETY
- EDUCATION FOR THE PROFESSIONS AND THE WORLD OF WORK
- EDUCATION FOR THE FAMILY AND VOLUNTEERISM
- EDUCATION FOR THE WHOLE LIFE CYCLE.

Specific topics for discussion at each of the four plenum sessions of the Commission were an important organizing force for the work of the Commission. As such, reference to these topical questions is made throughout the Final Report. Nevertheless, it is important to realize that the topics were vehicles to achieve understanding of the central issue: educating women for a full future. Consequently, the report itself is organized in a unitary fashion rather than the discrete topical lines suggested by the agenda for any given meeting.

From the conversations during the past year emerged an understanding on the part of the members of the Commission of the role of women's education over the remaining decades of this century. This is an exciting role to be played. Only the question of which organizations and institutions will play it remains to be answered. The members of the Commission believe that Midway College as Kentucky's only women's college has a unique and important role to play in this process. In line with this and with Dr. Hoffman's charge, this report is submitted with the hope that it can contribute to a stimulation of the educational resources available at Midway, so that the potential of the College can be completely realized on behalf of women's education.

I. EDUCATING WOMEN FOR A FULL FUTURE: THE ISSUE

The nature and process of the education of women in the remaining years of the Twentieth Century represents one of the greatest social and intellectual challenges that our society has ever encountered. The quality of this educational experience will deeply influence much of what life will be like in the 21st Century; in some instances it will, by itself, determine what certain outcomes will be. As an issue, therefore, it requires careful analysis and acute insight. Insight of this type is not the privilege or unique right of any individual or group. It is bred of experience and conscious reflection on that experience.

To their work the members of the Women's Education Study Commission brought this experience as people of business and commerce, volunteers, homemakers, lawyers, ordained clergy and professional educators. The variety of views expressed, and the panoply of experiences from which those views sprang, represented one of the greatest strengths of the Commission. These views were also brought to a focus by common readings which were made available to all the members. These readings, a list of which is incorporated in the attached selected bibliography, were not meant primarily to "inform" Commission members, but rather to serve as a catalyst for eliciting from the members of the Commission their views--views which had been distilled and purified by the filter of life experience.

From the beginning session there was consensus among all members

of the Commission--both public and faculty representatives--that there are three major components which any collegiate experience should today be providing for women students. These are: marketable skills; critical thinking capacity; and a realistic, positive self-image.

It is significant that these outcomes are named. It is equally significant that they are linked. In all the discussions of the Commission never was it suggested that these components should--or could usefully--be disengaged. Instead, the inextricable ties among them were constantly emphasized. The person lacking marketable skills will not enjoy a positive self-image; the person without critical thinking capacity is missing a key marketable skill; and the person without a positive self-image is unlikely to be a person with a well-developed critical thinking capacity. Unless the collegiate experience significantly contributes to the development of each of these components in the women students it serves, a college must question the "value added" dimension it is contributing to the society which is sending students to its environment.

The linkage normally drawn between these components was one of correlation; i.e., that where one exists, there will be found others of these components. It was generally conceded that, at the collegiate level of instruction, one's ability to think critically influenced the acquisition of both marketable skills and a positive self-image considerably more than these latter two variables influence either each other or the ability to think critically.

Regardless of the testable accuracy of this hypothesis, the Commission found that the ability to think critically ought to be considered of primary importance in the higher education experience. With this ability one is enabled to discern the important from the trivial, the truth from falsehood, the relevant from the inane and the logical from the ridiculous. Without the ability to make critical analyses and render careful, critical judgment, one is left floundering on the banks of her consciousness and her world.

The concern of the Commission is that the education of modern women at the collegiate level must be an education stressing thinking and value-centered understanding of the world in which women are living. The world of the latter part of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st Century is one of increased choice. Such choice is not an unmitigated good: wise choice can lead to development; uninformed or misguided choice can lead to destruction. When the higher education experience stresses critical thinking and value development, choice will lead to increased understanding of contingencies and greater appreciation for the differences which make the world interesting, informative, jubilant or dangerous.

A concomitant concept of expanded choice in the present and future is that of change. Multi-dimensional change--social, technological, cultural, economic, and geographic--is a fact of our lives and our world. It is the

ineluctable fact of contemporary existence; and this fact makes it imperative that modern women be enabled to participate in, assume responsibility for, make decisions about and help to implement that change. Modern women must be able to see themselves as able to engage meaningfully in the group processes of the family, voluntary agency or workplace where such change will occur. They must know how to cope with and educate the young, their age peers and their elders.

The Commission found that a fundamentally important part of knowing enough was in the ability to do, i.e., to perform. Analysis and synthesis of facts and critical thought is not enough. When thought is wedded to action, a new creation is made. It is the wedding of critical thinking with the observable universe that makes a practical difference in living. Because of the complexity and economic base of the modern world, only persons--women, as well as men--who possess skills valued in the marketplace will have the opportunity to test the worthiness of their ideas. On a much more practical level, a person cannot make a living in any modern society without marketable skills. Unable to find employment, this individual cannot develop or maintain a positive self-image. The Commission found, therefore, that technical ("can do") skills are of great importance to both the economic worth of a person and to her image of self worth. The possession of technical skills can be a liberating force through its potential for creating choices and options.

Notwithstanding the obvious support which the Commission gave for the mastery of technical skills, the members of the Commission affirmed the

primacy of critical thinking in the context of the academy of higher education for several reasons. Most **important** of these reasons were the following:

- 1) the Commission's concern that technological and economic change will create a continuing pattern of making today's highly valued skills tomorrow's obsolescent, unmarketable skills;
- 2) the Commission's concern that most women will be required to work in the marketplace at some point in their productive years and should, therefore, be as broadly prepared for that eventuality as possible.
- 3) the Commission's belief that a variety of agencies outside higher education can focus much more economically and selectively on the inculcation of particular technical skills than can higher education institutions;
- 4) the Commission's opinion that a woman as a student deserves first to have her human potential tapped before it is narrowly channeled into a particular career or life pattern she may choose.

While each of these concerns is worthy of consideration, perhaps the **fourth** one is of **greatest** consideration, since it speaks most cogently to the notion that education as a formal process in our society should be perceived in the final analysis as a process of awakening. Career training, on the other hand, is a process which necessarily limits inquiry in favor of socializing one to a relatively specialized and particular role.

While both of these are legitimate exercises in the society, career training is by its very nature a process of rigorous role definition. Women as thoughtful students have, according to the Commission, a legitimate expectation that they not be "pigeon-holed" into a role, before they are ready to make an informed choice of occupation. This is especially important in our society, since the technological and economic change spoken of supra, will almost certainly entail more than one--and perhaps seven or more--career changes for a woman who is today 18 years of age by the time of her retirement.

The Commission recognized that the process of becoming older can in itself create new needs for, and call for new styles of learning. In discussions of the differences in learning style which the aging process brings, it was emphasized that the older, returning (i.e., "nontraditional") woman student is perhaps more capable of making the informed choice of career early in her educational experience. This is probably more likely to the extent that her life experiences have created, through informal or formal means, an education which has promoted a liberalization of her thinking, a spectrum of choice and a value orientation to prepare her for acceptance of the consequences of her decision-making.

The Commission was fully cognizant of the desirability of an educational institution preparing women of all ages with marketable skills, provided that this does not become an escape from the pre-eminent concern to provide an environment in which ideas and values can be presented, challenged and reconstituted by the individual student. The Commission was made equally cognizant of the internalized impediments women face to the attainment of that goal.

Subjective internalized impediments to gaining acutely valued marketable skills and employment associated with them include the still entrenched and subconscious view that highly valued occupations requiring these skills are not "women's work". As a result many occupational choices which are high in income and social status have traditionally been off-limits to women. Likewise, low paying, low status occupations have been traditionally considered "women's work". The absurdity of this social fact is made apparent, when women invading an occupational area (e.g., the male-dominated role of "secretary" in the 19th Century) leads to its reduction both in monetary and psychological compensation.

Objective internalized impediments to the attainment of a broad spectrum of career choices are found wherever women lack--for whatever reasons--the requisite skills associated with high income/high status employment. The Commission was informed by one authority in the field of occupational choice that fully 80% of all employment options are unavailable to persons without an understanding of mathematics beyond basic math. Although everything connected with a technologically sophisticated economy suggests the need for mathematics understanding, most women as students have steered away from mathematics sophistication.

Both from experts in attendance at Commission meetings and from their own life experiences, the members of the Commission argued that intervention strategies to change the narrowing-of-choice patterns in women's socialization patterns are necessary and legitimate activities of higher education, and especially of a liberal arts college for women. Such

intervention strategies should be directed in the economic sense to supplying students with accurate, inclusive career information and career counseling. The Commission eschewed the idea of a women's college fawning on the idea of "woman-ness", as an irrelevant enslavement to an enslaved past. However, there was consensus that one role of an institution of higher education is to point out and to question critically and honestly the differences between the socialization patterns of females and males in modern societies. Members felt strongly that only through an honest assessment of these differences could women--and men--become persons who are really liberalized through the formal educational process.

The Commission was mindful of the fact that occupational choice for many women will continue to mean committing at least a period of their most economically productive years to non-gainful work as full-time homemakers and mothers in charge of nurturing the young. The Commission fully supported this homemaking role as a legitimate option of life planning. Further, it took the position that part of the educational mission of a college for women is to prepare students for the realities of living which they will inevitably face as single people contemplating marriage, married people considering parenthood, and parents planning educational and life choices for and with their children.

In this connection the members recognized that family and human relationships constitute the most important ingredients for success in life. The increased choices which modern living offers in seemingly geometrical progression create both the possibility of emotional enrichment and emotional strain on individuals and families. Even if a woman chooses a career which

serially includes a period as homemaker, in order to cope with the pressures of her home workplace, she must have outlets which are intellectually stimulating, personally developing, socially contributing and emotionally satisfying. Understanding these needs, the Commission supports the notion that a college for women should aid students to understand the role of volunteer as a half-way house between employment and homemaking. From volunteering, women who are employed can gain a sense of commitment to the community and a sense of self-worth which goes beyond their economic worth as measured by salaries and fringe benefits. Women who are currently full-time homemakers can find inspiration in role models, learn or re-learn the complexities of modern organization, become socialized to job-readiness and grow through the development of skills. All women can, through volunteering, gain through the networking which this kind of activity inevitably spawns. A liberal arts college for women can and should promote the benefits of volunteering to its students through a variety of modes.

A particular need for women in the current and coming decade will be the need for mentors. Volunteering can help assure mentors for women through the creation of networks and the exposure to role models. A clear distinction was drawn by the Commission between a mentor and a role model: a role model is an ideal to be emulated; a mentor is a person who will intervene on behalf of a protegee to create movement of resources necessary for that protegee to advance in the world of work and for the accomplishment of socially useful goals. While developing a mentor may be important for all age groups of women, it is especially important for those just beginning their careers. The Commission viewed it as important that members of the College faculty should consciously see themselves as mentors to their students and should promote

their students to others in the community who can assist them in their achievement of socially and individually important goals.

There was considerable attention given throughout the discussions of the Commission to the inevitable tension between personal and social goals. Continually, the need for a balanced outlook on life--i.e., a worldview which balances personal gain and individual enjoyment with the public good and the legitimate aspirations of the community--was espoused. In this respect, the Commission defended and supported the notion that religion and ethics are elements of the Collegiate experience which merit the greatest consideration by a liberal arts college for women. This is particularly true of an institution such as Midway whose historic links to the Church are firm.

Not only does an understanding of religion create a balance between the public and the private person, but also between the rational and the mystical in each person. By challenging persons to become articulate about ultimate concerns, religion frees us to examine the fleeting present with more comparison, deeper insight, and fresh approaches to understanding.

The comparative perspective in understanding was raised again and again as the best way to be completely informed. Comparative thinking was perceived by the Commission as the activity of the mind that is both the product of developing human creativity, and that becomes the basis for additional creativity. New settings, new problems and new technologies will increase the need for more creative thinking, if the human race is to develop feasible solutions to important dilemmas.

Comparative understanding of culture and foreign language skill was touted on numerous occasions as an area of tremendous need at the higher education level. Examples of the tremendous problems which ensue from cultural insularity and poverty in foreign language skill were epitomized by the General Motors failure of the "NOVA" Chevrolet sales in Spanish-speaking countries, where "no va" means "it doesn't go".

In summary, based upon the thinking of the Commission as recounted above, three major findings emerged from the Women's Education Study Commission for meshing the curriculum of Midway College to the world around it--the same world in which its current students will be forced to live. These are:

- 1) All students at Midway College should receive an education which includes survival skills of two types: basic skills in computation and written and oral communication; and technical skills necessary in the marketplace for earning a living;
- 2) the educational experience at Midway college should be liberalizing, i.e., it should develop a student's ability to think critically;
- 3) the educational experience at Midway College should foster a sense of integration of life experiences, knowledge of facts and concepts and critical analysis in favor of the resolution of problems for the benefit of both the individual and the community of which she forms part.

To that end, the Commission suggested in all meetings a variety of modes through which the College could help realize these important goals by appropriate and meaningful institutional response. In the following section of this report, we have attempted to pull together the most widely considered proposals that were voiced by the Commission's membership.

II. EDUCATING WOMEN FOR A FULL FUTURE: INSTITUTIONAL POSTURE AND RESPONSE

Awareness of the promise and problems associated with educating women for a full future places Midway College in a position where determined and useful initiatives can be undertaken with a high probability of success. The Commission is in accord on the potential which lies before Midway College. The Commission believes that the future of Midway is promising as the only women's college in Kentucky and as one of only five independent junior colleges in the state. By utilizing the assumptions in the first part of this report, the College can make important contributions throughout the rest of the 20th Century to the education of women for a full future. In order to act upon these assumptions, it is necessary for the College to position itself so that it casts accurately to the public an image of itself which it wishes to become.

The Commission believes that to make best use of its potential for educating women the College must do more to project an image of itself as a

college with a firm commitment to liberal learning that is able to produce graduates in a time span of two or three years who can function effectively in the world of work. In other words, if the college is to take full advantage of its role as a women-only institution, it must position itself so that its image is perceived correctly and positively by the public. This image should be a blended and harmonious vision of a college which educates women to examine the possibilities which are theirs and trains women in the relatively short time associated with associate degree programs to obtain and hold satisfying employment.

In order for this positioning and advertising to be successful, the faculty of the College must have a firm image of their role at the institution. This role must be primarily that of quality teaching, since all other roles are of secondary importance at the junior college level. Quality teaching implies accurate and adequate advising, not only about courses and programs of study at the College, but also about the range of employment options and senior college options available to students upon graduation from Midway.

The College needs to consider the development of specific training options for the faculty as a group and as individuals to create the unique qualities the faculty must have to make the Midway experience a unique learning process. Such training options should broaden the institutional perspective of faculty outside their areas of expertise; create on-going faculty communication on an across-discipline basis; and make faculty members more aware of the choices and needs of students they are serving. The Commission itself was made aware of the curriculum and the current thinking of the faculty through the ~~members~~ of the Commission who were Midway faculty.

The Commission was pleased to note the enthusiasm, the initiatives and accomplishments which the faculty in recent years have supported to increase academic quality at the college.

The Commission took note upon several occasions to emphasize that a quality educational program can be the only guarantee of an educational institution's acceptance by its community. In the case of Midway the Commission felt that both the quality and uniqueness of the educational program should involve a harmonious interweaving of marketable skills with a firm, strong liberal learning base. The College should insist that courses and programs of study, which are occupational/technical, incorporate humane values and basic skills of computation and communication. Likewise, courses and programs of study that are general education in nature should incorporate an appreciation of practical, job-related and occupational information.

In its efforts to promote a clear image of Midway College as a quality liberal arts institution for women capable of training students at a high level of job readiness, the College should seek to enlist the support of the alumnae body of Midway College and Pinkerton High School. The most natural and most enthusiastic ambassadors of any college are--or should be--its alumnae body, for they are the persons who have been served by the College. They are also the persons who stand to gain most by the general community's recognition of the worth of the educational process at their alma mater. Efforts should be made to get alumnae onto the Midway College campus for educationally related events, so that the alumnae can see, understand and become enthusiastic about the academic changes which must inevitably occur at a college seeking to remain vital.

In keeping with the Commission's concerns about and interest in role models and mentors, the Commission recommends that the College explore a variety of methods to bring onto the campus role models for the students of the College. Such role models should include successful alumnae, members of the local community, and perhaps some recognized celebrities. These role models should be made accessible to students in modes which are as natural as possible to impress upon students their own similarities with these persons and their own possibilities for success in the world of work, in leisure, in family living and in life generally.

Likewise, the Commission felt strongly that members of the Faculty have an important role to serve both as role models and as mentors. The human strengths of any faculty member need to be perceived in and outside the context of course and classes for both younger and more mature students. The community and knowledge-base resources which a faculty member possesses should be available for tapping by the students.

The College needs to be prepared to respond in the broadest possible way to the development of its youngest students' human potential. To do this effectively, the College should consider how it can create--especially for its residential students--a rich, stimulating, general environment on campus from which student goals can emerge and become specific. Younger students want and need time to consider their options. In a stimulating, growth-producing residential environment the College can foster the process of option-expansion in these students.

Such an environment should not be developed only with the residential student in mind, although these students will be the chief beneficiaries of it. The College must have a large and dedicated population of residential students to demonstrate the vitality of the school. As the end of the 20th century draws near, the only growth sector of American higher education student populations is to be found among nontraditionally aged (i.e., 23 and older) women who generally reside off campus. In the recent past this latter group has demonstrated nationally its motivation to learning, its seriousness of employment goals and its economic importance. These more mature students have also demonstrated at Midway College and elsewhere both the strength they can lend to the educational process on the campus and the special needs they have as a nonresidential group. Because of the number of nontraditional students with young children, the College should investigate the possibility of space on the campus for an inexpensive drop-in day care service to aid these students to attend class, use the library and participate in on-campus activities. Such a service would be in addition to the Midway Preschool Center which offers a scheduled education and day care program.

Finally, the Commission is of the opinion that the social, intellectual and occupational development of the students at Midway College can most effectively be promoted by active efforts directed at linking this development with college-approved volunteer activities, mentoring and paid-work internships for which academic credit is available. The Commission was pleased to be made aware that since the 1980-1981 academic year, all programs of study have included the possibility of internships, clinicals or practica. The College should promote student involvement in volunteer

activities, so that students--especially the younger ones--come to accept the notion that community service is an obligation of a person who possesses an education, useful skills and health. As discussed in more general terms in the first of this report, volunteer activities will also promote the person's career and personal goals through networking and an understanding of human behavior in organizational efforts. At the campus level, this kind of college sponsorship will necessarily increase contact and cooperation between those segments of the college community--student affairs and academics--most intimately involved with the careers of students. In so doing, the enriched campus environment will become more obvious in the life of the College and to the members of the community.

In summary, the Commission believes that Midway College already exhibits many of the objective criteria it needs to address the education of women for a full future. By using more, and more varied, efforts at linking these existing elements, and by creating others which do not yet exist, Midway College can both promote itself to a potential student market and demonstrate a unique educational image as Kentucky's only women's college. As a junior college grounded in the liberal arts, committed to academic quality and prepared to graduate labor market-ready women, Midway College is providing a much needed resource for the entire State of Kentucky and the surrounding region. It is important that all available means be used by the College to maintain and enhance the academic strength of the College, and to promote and sponsor non-classroom activities which will build personal and career confidence among Midway students. If this is done, the public will find no difficulty in understanding and endorsing the unique gifts which Midway does indeed possess.

III. EDUCATING WOMEN FOR A FULL FUTURE:

SPECIFIC CURRICULAR IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS.

The Commission's work involved sketching future needs for the education of women generally. This line of reasoning led naturally to a set of suggestions, as outlined in Section II of this report, for institutional posturing. And, in turn, the Commission was led to discuss suggestions for specific changes, developments or considerations within the curriculum of Midway College.

Both because of the nature of the Commission and the charge to it, the suggestions for curricular changes did not often assume a completely specific character. However, the Commission did stipulate enough specific content in certain areas to warrant close consideration by the faculty and the administration for possible course development.

Most importantly, and fundamentally, the Commission made numerous comments about the need for all Midway College students to receive good instruction in the basic skill areas of English composition and mathematics at least at the fundamental levels of algebra. The continuing need for good quality skills in English composition has been exacerbated by the educational smorgasbord model of high schools and colleges in the 1970's which allowed students to take non-essential courses and avoid these basic skills areas. Any college which can guarantee the public that its students are mastering basic English composition and fundamental algebra will be helping to guarantee employment for its graduates. (Members of the Commission were pleased to

learn that students cannot graduate from Midway without having completed both required English composition courses and the lowest level math course in their chosen major with at least a grade of "C". However, there was deep sentiment expressed that the skills in the English courses needed to be demonstrated continually, and that the lowest level course for all the College's graduates in mathematics should be Introductory Algebra).

The Commission's concern for the future educational needs of women was the impetus for a related course recommendation: to wit, that the College strongly recommend that all students have a course which provides them with basic familiarity with the process of the computer and its potential uses. Many members of the Commission were deeply impressed by the notion of the "electronic cottage", as it is defined in the work of Alvin Toffler. The idea that a woman's ability to function in paid office work, as well as her ability to function as an intelligent consumer, homemaker and mother, may well be dependent on her ability to manipulate the computer is a speculation which the Commission cannot ignore and did not dismiss in making this recommendation to the College.

On many occasions and in many different ways commission members made reference to the desirability of having all students able to speak effectively in public group situations. While some members talked in terms of "assertiveness training sessions" in the residence halls, and others spoke of using various means in as many classroom situations as possible, Commission representatives expressed a strong preference for a required course in public speaking and debate. The course would exist for two basic and inextricably linked purposes: to provide training in persuasion and in using logic

under public conditions which can be stressful.

The Commission reiterated support for the College's position as a church-related institution which requires a course in religion for graduation with a degree. However, it was the strong conviction of the Commission that a course in religion at Midway College should be for the purpose of exposing students to religious questions and allowing the individual student to decide upon any ultimate meaning these questions have for her life. By the same token, the Commission repudiated the notion that courses in religion at the collegiate level should assume the quality of "religious instruction and indoctrination" as something which is opposed to the spirit of a liberal arts education.

The idea that courses should lead to, and perfect, inquiry made many of the members of the Commission hope that courses at Midway would be organized in such a fashion that "learning to learn" library skills would become part of every student's repertoire by her graduation from the College. A few members of the Commission were willing to recommend that all students be thoroughly versed in library procedures and library knowledge, so that they could pass some type of library understanding examination. The Commission agreed that the College should in some way guarantee--either through a course or through the curriculum generally--that a student graduating from Midway College will know all essential skills for library search and research, so that she can find information of importance to her in books, articles and other information resources commonly located in libraries.

The idea of education for the whole life cycle was a theme which recurred with frequency during the deliberations of the Commission. Library search and research skills assume much of their saliency for that reason. Likewise, the idea that skills necessary for occupation finding and career advancement were considered important by the Commission. The Commission urged that a credit-bearing course on career and life planning be instituted at the College, so that students might be made graphically aware of both occupational information and occupational choice. The notion of career and life planning suggests an integrated approach to one's employment plans with one's personal, family and community concerns. It was the Commission's feelings that the latter categories ought not be sacrificed on behalf of the former.

The Commission expressed a consensus opinion that students at a junior college--regardless of their major--should be educated to accept responsibility for seeking (or creating) their own employment slot. They should also be led to see the multiplicity of possibilities for employment and the transferability of skills which they already possess and from which they can build wholly novel careers in the future. A worthwhile career and life planning course can help students work toward these goals.

The increased accessibility of the world to us as Americans--and to American women--also has added an increased dimension of vulnerability for the unprepared. The Commission recognizes the time limitations on the College and on the individual woman in an associate degree program to prepare herself educationally for the challenges of the world at the end of the 20th century.

Nevertheless, the Commission feels that the need for cultural awareness is so crucial that the College should provide some fundamental courses in the social studies that require students to become aware of the world around them. A variety of Commission members laid stress on the desirability of having all students have a fundamental understanding of at least one foreign language prior to graduation. American commercial ties to Latin America, the immigration invasion of the United States by Hispanics, the horse industry's connections with France and the proximity to Quebec were all cited as reasons to encourage students strongly to take either French or Spanish while at the College.

The force of government involvement in our lives today and the historical reasons for this involvement led many Commission members to suggest that the College introduce students to the major periods of history, the development of American society and political institutions and a basic understanding of economics. A concern of the Commission was that any course in social studies be developed in such a way that it stress relationships, not individual facts; and that it be comparative and suspend ultimate judgement.

Several persons on the Commission expressed the view that all courses within the curriculum should work toward integration of the student's cognitive, emotional and performance development. There was some support in the Commission for an Integrated History of Ideas course or course set.

Finally, there was general agreement by the Commission that the College has a special opportunity and obligation to provide students with quality off-campus experiences as part of the student's credit-bearing

course load. The goals of these experiences should be: to introduce the student to the conditions of the world of work; to increase the student's awareness of opportunities and limitations associated with particular occupations; to allow the student to begin a fruitful networking which may lead to employment upon graduation; to develop healthy and reflective attitudes about employment; to increase the quality of employment skills a student possesses; and to develop certain employment skills a student has not had before the off-campus experience.

There was considerable sentiment voiced by some Commission members for the College's willingness to engage in offering more off-campus seminars in a variety of subject matters. These seminars could be built upon the paralegal studies seminar model--i.e., they would be topical, offered for credit as an option and held in a desirable location. They would serve a twin purpose of helping to advertise the faculty and other resources the College has to offer learners and of educating women (primarily mature adults) in a specific area for which a need exists. Seminars on investments, estate planning, foreign travel, etc. were mentioned as possible topics.

In summary, the Commission views the future of Midway's curriculum with great optimism as a vehicle to help women achieve legitimate goals which they have either been denied or have not taken full advantage of in an earlier time period. This potential can only be realized, however, if the College has a clear vision of the opportunity to combine career-preparation programs with the fundamental liberal learning skills our society rightfully associates with an educated and cultivated person. The Commission believes that the College will promote both its own market acceptance and the futures of the women it

serves to the extent that these specific course recommendations are implanted in the curriculum with thoughtfulness and care.

IV. ONGOING FEEDBACK

At the final session of the Commission, the public members were pleased to learn that a number of suggestions which they had made at earlier meetings are actively being discussed by the faculty and administration and will shortly be implemented on an experimental basis. Among these items listed by faculty members which were currently being considered, or have been accepted as changes at the College as a result of the work of the Commission, were:

1. a career and life planning course will be initiated in the Fall, 1982 semester to be team-taught by the Dean of Students and the Director of Counseling Services;
2. a campus volunteer services bureau will be established in the Dean of Student's office to provide networking, referrals and avenues for creative ideas of service for students;
3. an increased effort to provide career counseling--especially career awareness and an appreciation of the transferability of skills--for students majoring in General Studies to promote their market acceptance, especially if they choose not to transfer to senior institutions;

4. an integrated effort by the Chairman of the Department of Nursing, the Director of General Studies and the Director of Counseling Services to counsel with General Studies students interested in entering the nursing program to assess their needs and their understanding of this occupation;
5. an increased interest on the part of the Faculty to make the general education component of the curriculum as vital as possible through such vehicles as an National Endowment for the Humanities consulting grant to link the humanities with occupational education and an increased emphasis on integrating courses and course goals.
6. the purchase of computer hardware designed both to teach computer science for-credit classes and to stimulate computer awareness, computer-associated instruction and computer literacy upon the part of the faculty and student body.

The Commission was made aware that the final report will be used in an ongoing fashion by the College through inclusion into the process of decennial Self-Study which is required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. At the final meeting of the Commission, Dr. Hoffman requested that members agree to meet on an annual basis to discuss a particular item of interest to the College and, thereby, to act as a kind of ongoing advising body to the College. Members who were present assented to this request.

The members of the Commission consider that the College has begun to look carefully at its potential for creating an intellectual climate for women students which combines the best of the liberal learning tradition leavened with the most defensible aspects of occupational education. This mix will redound to the benefit of the College by attracting a qualified student body, producing a satisfied and growing base of alumnae support and creating a

spirit of appreciation in the Central Kentucky community which is served by the College. To the extent Midway College pursues these goals it will be educating women for a full future.

MEMBERS OF THE WOMEN'S EDUCATION STUDY COMMISSION
MIDWAY COLLEGE
Midway, KY

Public Members

Dr. Lillalyce Akers,
Professor of Sociology
University of Louisville

Ms. Carol H. Baughman
Professional Librarian
and Homemaker
Frankfort, KY

Ms. Rebecca Bennett
Executive Assistant
Domestic and International
Sales Promotion
Kentucky Council on Agriculture

Mrs. Raymond Burse
Certified Public Accountant
Humana, Inc.

Dr. Lyman Ginger (retired)
Dean of the College of Education
University of Kentucky

Dr. Jean Givens
Investment Counselor
Merrill Lynch, Pierce,
Fenner and Smith

Mrs. Charles Hembree
Volunteer and Member of the
Commission on Higher Education
in Kentucky's Future

Ms. Jessica Schikler
Executive Director
Commission on Women
Commonwealth of Kentucky

Mrs. Jane H. Midkiff
Executive Director
Lexington Hearing and
Speech Center

Dr. Eric Mount
Professor of Religion
Centre College of Kentucky

Ms. Elaine Mussleman
Managing Director
C. D. Harris and Sons Insurance
Louisville, KY

Ms. Nancy Nave
Certified Public Accountant
Ashland, KY

Ms. Janet White Pruitt
Attorney
White, McCann and Stewart
Winchester, KY

The Honorable Jackie Swigart
Secretary of the Department
of Natural Resources
Commonwealth of Kentucky

Dr. Mary Wharton (retired)
Chairman
Department of Biological Sciences

Faculty Members

Dr. Deborah Bridwell
Director
Office of Counseling Services
Midway College

Dr. Geri Greenway
Chairman
Department of Management
Midway College

Dr. George Weick
Instructor
Journalism and English
Midway College

Ms. Peggy Charles Wilds
Instructor
Nursing
Midway College

Ex Officio Members

Dr. Nelson M. Hoffman
President
Midway College

Dr. R. Lynn Kelley
Dean of the College
Midway College

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Resource Persons:

In addition to standard bibliographic sources, the Commission drew upon experts as resources. These persons were either members of the Commission or invited guests. All shared their expertise through prepared remarks which were delivered during the plenum sessions of the Commission. The contributions of those persons are gratefully acknowledged here, along with a description of their special contribution.

Ms. Carol Baughman, Commission Member. Prepared remarks, "The Educational Needs of Homemakers and Volunteers."

Mr. John Frazer, Executive Director, Council of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities. Prepared, written remarks, "The Equality of Opportunity to be Elitist."

Dr. Jean Givens, Commission Member. Prepared remarks, "The Women's Movement: Then and Now."

Dr. Geri Greenway, Commission Member. Prepared remarks, "Integrated Education."

Ms. Joy Hembree, Commission Member. Prepared remarks, "Volunteer Activities as a Way of Life."

Ms. Judy Offutt, invited community resource person. Prepared, written remarks, "Volunteerism: The Bridge Between Family Life and Paid Employment."

Dr. Pamela Remer, Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology and Counseling, University of Kentucky. Prepared remarks, "Socializing Females to Career Choice: Reflections on the Process and Strategies for Intervention and Change."

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